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FREE MILITARY SCHOOL,

FOR APPLICANTS FOR COMMISSIONS IN

COLORED TROOPS,

No 1210 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.

ESTABLISHED IN 1878.

PROXY COMMITTEE FOR RECRUITING COLORED REGIMENTS.

JOHN H. TAGGART,

Lieut Colonel 12th Regiment Pennsylvania Reserves,

PREFECTOR.

1880.

PHILADELPHIA:

WILLIAM L. BROWN, No. 1210 - A - CHESTNUT STREET.

Some Members per
John Jordan Jr.

Nov. 28th 1864.

COLL. *

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FREE MILITARY SCHOOL

FOR APPLICANTS FOR COMMANDS OF

COLORED TROOPS,

No. 1219 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.

ESTABLISHED BY

SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE FOR RECRUITING COLORED REGIMENTS.

JOHN H. TAGGART,

Late Colonel 12th Regiment Pennsylvania Reserves,

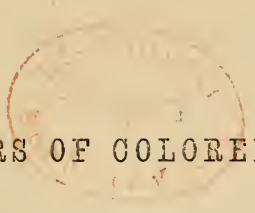
PRECEPTOR.

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PHILADELPHIA:

KING & BAIRD, PRINTERS, No. 607 SANSON STREET.

1863.



OFFICERS OF COLORED TROOPS.

When the Government adopted the policy of organizing colored troops, it constituted a Board of Examiners, whose duty it is to examine all persons, whatever their rank, who make application for commissions in that branch of the public service. MAJOR-GENERAL SILAS CASEY is the permanent President of the Board. The other members of the Board, consisting of two Colonels, one Lieutenant-Colonel, one Surgeon, and one Lieutenant, who is *ex officio* the Recorder, are changed from time to time, according to the exigencies of the public service, but the President being permanent, the utmost regularity and uniformity of examination and decision are secured.

Up to the present date, one thousand and fifty-one applicants have been examined; of these, five hundred and sixty have been passed, and four hundred and ninety-one rejected.

The applicants are first examined in Infantry tactics, Army Regulations, and in regard to their general information. They are then turned over to the Surgeon for physical examination. If found capable, they are recommended to the War Department, to be appointed to such positions as they have respectively been adjudged competent to fill. Every candidate stands upon his merits—the most obscure corporal or private stands an equal chance with the most favored and influential citizen. No recommendations, however high, are re-

garded as any compensation for lack of qualifications, and while the best testimonials that can be offered are the evidence of faithful and competent military service in the field, it is not to be understood that actual experience in the service is an indispensable pre-requisite. A large number of the successful applicants have had no such experience, having but recently left the school, the college, the desk, farm or workshop, and by a few weeks' diligent study of the elementary books, fitted themselves for command, as Lieutenants or Captains, and in some instances as Majors and Lieutenant-Colonels.

THE QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED.

First, the applicant must be *physically sound*, in order that he may endure the required service, and not necessarily fail in the discharge of the duties of his position, and soon become a pensioner upon the bounty of the Government, without the possibility of equivalent service.

If a Lieutenant, he should understand and be able to explain the elementary principles laid down in Casey's Infantry Tactics, as found in the school of the "Soldier" and "Company." He should comprehend the duties of sentinels, guards, &c., as contained in the Army Regulations. He should know all about "Muster for Pay," "Muster and Pay Rolls," "Descriptive List," and how to keep "Company books." And withal, should have at least such education as can usually be obtained at a common school. The range of study for this grade is exceedingly moderate, and the position is attainable by any bright young man having a fair common school education.

If a Captain, he must possess all the qualifications prescribed for a Lieutenant, but must be more thoroughly posted, and should know something of battalion movements, and have a better general education.

A Field Officer is examined as closely, in regard to elementary principles, as Captain or Lieutenant, and is set down for the position of Major, Lieut.-Colonel, or Colonel, according as he shall show himself additionally qualified for the superior position desired. A field officer should, in addition to his own peculiar duties, understand the duties of line officers, and be able to instruct them, if deficient.

The Colonel of a Regiment should be very superior. He should be able to detect, instantly, the errors of all officers under him ; should be able to impart instruction to all, and to decide correctly on the instant all questions referred to him. *These troops have no knowledge of arms, and no acquaintance with the duties of the soldier, and unless well officered the whole experiment will prove worse than a failure.*

No talents, no zeal, no sympathy for the colored race, unless attended with military knowledge, and power to command men in battle, can avail ; and no amount of pretence or number of testimonials of influential friends will answer the purpose ; the applicant must give reasonable evidence of his ability to command. If pretence without merit, or zeal without knowledge, or mere recommendations of personal and political friends would be sufficient evidence of fitness to command, an examination would be an idle and useless ceremony. It is the obvious duty of the Board of Examiners to select the best officers possible from those who come before it.

THE URGENT NEED OF OFFICERS.

Now, that it has become the fixed policy of the Government to use Colored Troops to a large extent, its efforts to organize regiments are seriously hampered by the want of competent officers to train and command them. It is seen that about forty-seven *per cent.* of the applicants for command have been rejected for lack of knowledge. Of these three hundred and seventy-two were officers, privates or non-commissioned officers from the army, and *most of this particular class* and very many others from civil life would have passed the board and obtained commissions, if they had, under an efficient teacher, devoted a few weeks to the study of the principles and details laid down in the Books on Tactics and Army Regulations.

The rejection of so large a proportion of the applicants, particularly of so many earnest and brave soldiers who have stood the shock of battle, has doubtless deterred numbers from offering themselves for examination, and it is feared that a general but unjust impression has been made, both in the army and in the public mind, that the examination by the board is too severe, and that few, but those who have enjoyed a collegiate education, or have actually commanded troops in the field with credit, can pass the Board.

Nothing could be further from the fact. Whilst the Board properly insists that the applicant must show true knowledge of the principles of tactics and capacity to command men and *take good care of them*, and whilst it inflexibly rejects all who fall short in these essentials,

the Board deploras the stern necessity which compels it to reject good men, particularly soldiers whose deficiencies might be overcome by a few weeks careful preparation. With the knowledge of these facts, and in order to meet the increased demands for officers to command colored troops, The Philadelphia Supervisory Committee for Recruiting Colored Regiments, at the suggestion of the Board of Examiners at Washington, has established a Free School for Military Tactics, in their Building, No. 1210 Chestnut street. The committee has secured the services of a well recommended and experienced officer, competent to faithfully instruct and prepare applicants for examination. The school is amply supplied with books and everything necessary to its thorough organization. The Committee invites young men in civil life, *who are physically sound*, and especially privates, and non-commissioned officers in service who may aspire to command colored soldiers, to avail themselves of the facilities which this free military school offers.

Camp William Penn, the largest camp existing for the organization and disciplining of Colored Troops, is in the immediate vicinity of the city, of easy access at low rates of fare. Arrangements have been made with Colonel Wagner, Post Commander, by which students of this school, upon the recommendation of the preceptor, will be allowed to sojourn temporarily at the camps and exercise the functions of officers, in assisting to drill and train the Regiments that may be organizing there.

The superior comforts and cheapness of living, remarkable in Philadelphia, offer special attraction to all who may seek the advantages of the school, and es-

pecially to those of moderate means. Good board can be had from \$3.50 to \$5 per week.

The Committee trusts that its efforts by means of a military school to provide what the country so urgently needs at the present time, namely, applicants competent to be officers in the colored regiments, will be handsomely responded to by the spirited young men of the country—by those in the army, as well as those in civil life, and that it may be able to speedily furnish the Board of Examiners a sufficient number of applicants well-grounded in the knowledge of tactics, and otherwise fitted to command troops, who may pass examination and thus largely relieve the War Department from the great pressure now existing for officers to organize and train the hosts of colored men now seeking to enter the service of their country.

THOMAS WEBSTER,

Chairman.

CADWALADER BIDDLE,

Secretary.

Head-Quarters of Supervisory Committee }
for Recruiting Colored Regiments. }

PHILADELPHIA, December 26th, 1863.

Hints to applicants for admission to the Free Military School
established by the

PHILADELPHIA SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE FOR
RECRUITING COLORED TROOPS.

I. Each applicant must apply to the committee for admission, by letter of his own composition and written by himself, and he must submit testimonials of general good character, and receive an affirmative reply before he can be admitted to the School.

II. No one (unless a soldier having experience in the field, and able to read and write, and understanding the primary rules of arithmetic,) should make application, unless he has had a good common school education, is familiar with arithmetic as far as fractions—vulgar and decimal, and has some knowledge of geography, and the outlines of history—ancient and modern.

III. Applicants having a superior general education, but without knowledge of tactics and army regulations, are informed that it is probable that the Board at Washington, after examining them on tactics, will question them in the various branches of knowledge they have studied, with the view of ascertaining the extent of their capacity to acquire and retain knowledge, and with a view of recommending them for the highest rank that their proficiency in tactics will justify.

IV. As soon as the students, in the judgment of the preceptor, are likely to pass a favorable examination, application will be made for permission for them to appear before the Board, and whilst waiting for such permission, students will be sent to Camp Wm. Penn, to temporarily exercise the functions of officers of Colored Troops.

V. The Committee will do all in its power to secure an early examination by the Board at Washington, of such Students as the preceptor shall recommend, and in every other way exert itself to save the Students their time and expenses.

VI. Persons having, in their own judgment, such proficiency in tactics, army regulations, and general education, as will enable them to pass a favorable examination, may if they desire it have a preliminary examination by the preceptor, and if his opinion is favorable, and they have certificates of general good character, they will be immediately recommended for examinations for command, or, if the preceptor should not pass favorably on them, they may enter the School and acquire the requisite knowledge. The attention of *privates and non-commissioned officers of the army* is specially invited to this.

VII. It should be distinctly understood, that the instruction, use of books, maps, blocks, and opportunities of camp experience, are all gratuitous; all personal expenses, including traveling hither, board, and transportation to and from Washington, by those who may be recommended, and all other expenses, must be defrayed by the students themselves.

VIII. The following extract from a private letter dated 21st December, from one of the Board to a member of the Supervisory Committee, is given as a *general hint*: "There is evident falling off in candidates—that is, while the numbers increase the material declines in quality—we send away some, perhaps many, who if they had a few days well directed study under a good tutor, would make good officers. But certain things must be known by all officers before they can be trusted with troops. Good intentions are very well as far as they go, but we must have good intentions combined with knowledge, and that knowledge must embrace certain fundamentals. I hope you will stand as a high wall to keep out all drones, all nincompoops, all mere snivelers, and send us your good, wide-awake, clear-headed young men of the true ring—the best material offered for line officers is of the non-commissioned officers in the army—they as a class are superior to the commissioned officers of the army."



The following is taken from Order of War Department establishing the Board of Examination:

4. Each applicant shall be subjected to a fair, but rigorous examination, as to physical, mental and moral fitness to command troops.

5. The Board shall specify for what grade of commissions the several applicants are fit; and shall also classify and number them according to merit or proficiency.

6. Appointments to each grade shall only be made from the candidates approved by the Board, and in the order of merit recommended by it.


7. The Report of the Board, if adverse, shall be conclusive; and no person rejected by it, shall be re-examined.

ANALYSIS OF THE EXAMINATION OF APPLICANTS FOR COMMAND OF COLORED TROOPS, before the BOARD at WASHINGTON.

RANK.	No. examined.	NO. ACCEPTED AND FOR WHAT RANK RECOMMENDED						No. rejected.
		Colonel.	Lt. Colonel.	Major	Capt.	1st Lt.	2d Lt.	
Colonel, . . .	4			2				2
Lt. Colonel, .	1					1		
Major,	7	1	3	1	1			1
Captain, . .	52	1	5	5	15	5	3	18
1st Lieuten't,	35	2		4	4	5	5	15
2nd do	18				5	2	3	8
Sergeant, . .	304		1		30	45	83	145
Corporal, . .	139				12	29	43	55
Private, . . .	222				11	25	58	128
Citizens, . .	293	1	2	13	33	40	66	138
Total, . . .	1,075	5	11	25	111	152	261	510

WASHINGTON, D. C , December 26, 1863.

NOTE.

 When the reader has perused this pamphlet he is requested to circulate it, in such a manner as will best bring the school to the notice of those who desire to command COLORED TROOPS.



PHILADELPHIA SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE

1861

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